



THE NOSEGAY OF NAZMS



Poems by
Dr. Shabnam Ashai

Translated into English
Mushtaque B Barq

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UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR

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Introduction

In the immeasurable infinite, an indescribable eminence is the eternal abode of immortality resting on the monumental columns of fertile imaginations in the gorgeous costume of the creative mind. Mind, the independent existence of pulsating reality resonates powerfully in the judicial vacancies of the cosmos cheerfully like a rapturous whirl of an intoxicated *faqir*. The state of 'statelessness' surpasses the finite intellect who in reciprocity beats his chest to nullify 'breaking is making.' Creative art is that exiled rhythm that no meticulous craftsman has ever framed, claimed or even dreamed to arrest in any humdrum frontier. A craftsman at the ingress of the mighty loop along with his begging bowl is but a grain of sand or a droplet of a splash in the bottomless ocean and unpredictable desert. A silent crowd is a relevant companion of a creative writer headed by an authoritative sensitivity. Sensitivity devoid of digital senses and decorous discourses of diction, but a feeling copious with empathy. Sympathy is a brick of a craftsman that he uses according to his set frames, but empathy is godly for lesser known mortals. Any form of art devoid of empathy is but a framed trace of traceless treasure that de-shapes a feeling, the language of the Lord. A deformed creature is a feeling held in the confines of reason supervised by a craftsman's cunning wife and draftsman's half widow. And a formless flight is a golden bird that Yeats and Iqbal derive out of creative capabilities to make it fly over the mounts of mundanity and across the valleys of validities. It is like Blake's fawn carefree and wandering in a creative mood to distort the lawns of experience.

The artist is in himself a domain of divinity, but a craftsman is a bundle wrapped in a veil. He lives in a frame and frames the observation, while as an artist is inseparability of creative expertise. He breaks, and takes a flight to ether, confirming his

residency where nothing but the vast infinite rules. A caged soul yearns but a free one enjoys freedom of expression. Art is to evoke aesthetic splendour and frames in fragments only defame the unrecognizable famed feeling. A breeze of bliss stays heavenly only when allowed to be felt, but loses sheen when framed on the glossy skin of technicalities. Craft is an orphan or a widow that lives at the mercy of virtue, but the art is a valid virtue.

Unless a creative artist dips the nib of his reed or the lashes of his brush into the gulf of godly profundity, the narrative and texture can never touch a human heart. And anything that maintains a distance from the human soul can only be a literary piece or a verbal explosion or a wall hanging devoid of life. Art is a driving force that guarantees eternity but craft only showcases the configuration destined to be ruined.

A poem, a story or a sketch are the products of creative zeal and the zeal is an unfathomable gesture of unapproachable reality hard to put on the belt of reason to carry the load of technics to corrupt a fertile mind. True narrative and proactive verse is an echo perceived by noble hearts, devoid of perception is a falsification of coinage.

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Coinage

Do you
 know
 a coinage thine
 neither in imagination,
 nay in the depths of conscience
 nor in any abode
 a place discovered
 in easily spoiled world
 whirling
 and wandering in discombobulation.
 Do you know
 in a pocket of thy coinage
 ye have nay a crafty coin
 to be familiar with
 bread or accord
 in the world.
 One of thy coinage
 Is as lonely
 like you !



I am Love

You have not taken me in
need nay I thy home, but
thy 'being'
to fill it I would
at every slice of time
suffuse it drop by drop!
Thy 'being' was alive with transcendency
that neither my aroma
nor my whirl
you could hardly feel
In annoyance, abhorrence
apprehensions or
predisposition thy 'being' was filled
to kill me
I only jingle in a state of modesty
I am love.....



The Only Truth

The tears ceased nay
 to hold the pen
 thy lion's share of love cascaded
 down in tears
 to weave you
 you forget to make and wrap
 the sheet of love
 God too
 at the time of weaving my destiny
 forgot to put me with someone
 or to be conceded
 both the declarations!
 You nurse trepidation
 and forget to nurture love,
 I
 In want of entwining and casing the love
 I am being sealed in the coffin
 for God's sake
 charge me nay of death
 death is the only reality
 the only reality.



Veil

The shelter was denied
 to my grave
 a handful of soil do offer
 that shall cover me
 You
 though being my costume
 exposed me
 I am not Lala Arifa
 to give you company
 I advanced through the right rib
 I am your soul mate
 the one who accompanied you to Heaven,
 affirmed not by my belief
 but by the Holy Quran
 you in distress wander
 carting the wound of thy rib
 I am not Lala Arifa
 to be sheltered by the oven
 do attend my grave
 with a handful of soil
 I shall be veiled.



Wandering Expedition

Your hands
 were busy in warps and wefts of feudalism
 you would entangle to the extent
 of making your finger inaccessible
 to be clenched
 to learn how to move onwards little by little
 in lallation would express
 what only you could comprehend!
 Now that I hold the limb of air
 walking in the company of imagination
 but what fell off my tongue
 is nothing but a babbled word
 still lying in the anteroom of that mansion
 where the whiff of the apple orchard
 still hunts for me daily.....
 where the stunning sunbeams
 still advance to evaluate me
 by passing through the balconies and archways
 in the lawn holding up a towering cypress tree
 looking forward at my probable occurrence.....
 but the wandering expedition
 has stepped upon me heavily.



Nazam

A nazam on the tack
 I just came
 to find among the crowd of unacquainted
 an acquaintance
 who would pat my back
 and declare
 thy parting has parted me!
 Ah! all the acquaintances
 are the victims of
 sentimental destitution!
 What wonderment!
 all but have put on display their disposition
 Come on
 O! My aspiring traveller
 let us release the nazam from the hanger
 and drop a message in his ear
 thy parting had parted me!



Stammer

My stammer
is the say of the pen
carved by your ego
and this echo
is the broken voice
of my actuality
devoid of feminism
only restlessness
nothing more!



The Snowfall

The snow is falling
not on the earth
but within my soul.....
Have you ever seen the snow
being iced up within someone's soul?
On the icy tops
the players
do downhill skiing.



Self

'Self'

submerged in the honey of ignominy
sucking the thumb!

The unrelatedness of relatives
is crawling on the walls of the house!

The kiss of dread

Is on the arid flaking lips

and you

like a flash of light

are moving in a state of fear.



The Aching Eye

I am such an oozed tear drop
cascaded from the aching eye
that
poured from the face of my existence
and clogging on the jugular vein
in a frigid state!
For a moment do bring thy searing lips
on my gullet
and suck my salt
to stay original!



Don't Be Sad

Don't be sad
 Nazam
 is reflecting upon me
 and me
 on your anteroom
 is burning like a candle....
 Before composing the Nazam
 my 'I'
 God knows how long
 was in prostration
 that on the rise bloomed
 that 'you' in you had died out !
 In this trauma
 I surrendered 'I' to the Nazam
 don't be sad
 do come
 you
 will find me blazing on thy anteroom.



Dejection

Every limb
is copious with you
you simply ignore
and take decisions
no way I take down
them the gullet!
But my guts have swallowed
my parlance !
In the mesh of rationality
who shall to you reveal
the voice of soul?



Dismantle Nay the Face

Dismantle nay
the face of loyalty by the scratches of uncertainties
for loyalty is the rose
of God's lawn
You have in solitude
advanced the nails of nihilism
You know
the dew of woes
every morning lays
a prayer rag of reliability
for a moment
live devoutly
decline to faith.



You Were with Me

As you were with me
 I was with myself
 You left
 then every moment
 with you passed by
 in witness to this stands
 the pleasing whiff
 that flows like loyal tears
 and extents after soaking the soul
 every night....



Deceit

Thy deceit
 is my lawlessness
 has ever an edifice
 been raised on sand dunes?
 The foundation of faith
 is laid on the soil of soul.
 Have you ever
 reflected upon seriously?
 Have you ever
 seen any soul being occupied
 by the sand of deceit?



Why the Eye Twitches

The eye is constantly twitching
that too the right one
was any accusation untested!
the response is yet to be sorted out
libels in the folds
of my mantle
were strapped
when I was picking you up
I have lost you
Why is the eye twitching?



Grief

Oh! Grief
I'm neither a word
nor a foil of paper
that you repeatedly take refuge in me
I'am a debtor of life
and fed up with you!
You counsel me Oh! Grief
who shall pay
the debt of life
when only a mound is but
thy accommodation.



Snowfall

Have you ever
in the snowfall of loneliness
seen the loss of pathways?
Everything gets inconspicuous
from the sight!
Life to.....
When in the snowfall of loneliness
the frosty mist
numbs the soul!



You

Thy You
 I too
 Use thy 'your'
 and you too
 like me
 shall be disrespected
 if you will
 misapprehend my substantiality.



Stillness

I had not offered my hand
but my soul
You have decked up my hand
the stillness of my soul
holds the hand
to pick the obscurities
owing to the ringing bells
why does the soul set up the affairs?
Is your soul deprived of hands
to open wide the stillness of the soul?



Thy Warm Hand

Put thy warm hand
 on the pulsating heart
 perchance the shiver
 of plaintive discourse
 be at ease
 you are but staring at the running waters
 let you before thy musing
 shall in fear be beaten
 flush away
 all the fears
 in the Dal
 bur before the Dal
 shall freeze
 I want to swim
 In thy fragrance.



Helter-Skelter

Helter-skelter (I) am
 like a disbanded book
 and on page all are
 letters and letters only
 some attar of thy memories
 keep filling the void of my 'self's' inn
 in eleven months
 in anticipation of March!
 Twelfth month of March
 (is) the season of love
 the same drizzle
 the same cascades
 the same rains
 but do you know
 how now in the season of love
 brings too many tears to me
 that I pour my God even.



Knock at the Door

The same drizzle
the same cascades
the same monsoon
ye a bit of spirit
and me a portion of grief had sown
our euphonious expressions
owing to our unification were gleaming
the season was love
we both had opened the chapters of love
throughout the night
to recite the verses of love
the flowers of union we had designated
that so early on the petals
were rustling dew drops
and on the jamb
was a deceitful knock of time.



Vermilion

Who has applied
the accused betrothal vermillion
on thy forehead?
Whose smile is falling off
in disguise of tears thine
In the debauched domination
no bureau of truth survives
wherein, someone his file of deeds
shall open
or to explore the pulse
of character,
You know
thy perception
is being used as a gemstone of a ring
how shall thy blind eyes
perceive the vision of truth?



Curfew

The widowed roads
of a curfewed city
are opening its eyes
in the womb of the city
what they see, don't know
so astonished!
Perhaps the earth
is bearing a child
The moon is silently peeping
through the windows
The stray dogs
in groups are barking
Life is
in slumber
and I am passing like the night
the entire Valley is under curfew.



Hold Me

Hold me
 I am drowning
 in the bottomless waters
 of hopelessness!
 I am drowning
 by holding within me
 various robust currents
 hold me
 don't argue
 but for a moment
 do listen to thyself
 the ornamentation of angst
 shall die away
 hold me....

❖❖❖

Decision

I am basking in the desert
or counting the steaming springs
of love on the earth
a woe it is to decide too.



Mourning

I mourn your loss!
The deadly silence of graveyard
and me.....
In the rust of silence
the expressions go waste
and the tongue
bereft of affinity for taste
of fellow feeling
is all ears.....
even a few words of love miss the mark
everything is over sighted.....
The engraved spooning
of saffronised herbs
are yet to be served!



Bracelet

Nay my wrists
have seen the bracelets but dreams
the wrists have turned into the ears of my soul
to listen to the clink of dreams
but the ink of fate
are inquiring about the flavour!



Deceit

The first-hand deceit
 is hitherto raw
 but even on breathing
 it is oozing!
 The stack of raw mud is ogling
 to be baked
 in the blazing hearth
 the fire cannot only offer severity
 but a grimed smudge too!
 The smear of belief
 on the forehead is marked
 but on being brow broken
 the faith is knocked out
 O! Lord
 how now should I
 fill the belief
 in the fickle pots?
 Which soil shall now fix the broken brow?



Hopelessness

Being wrecked by the hopelessness
why now
to rely on hope
that your dawn begins at the door of a sage
and your day ends at the mausoleum of a *faqir*!
When the time slipped off thy hands
(it) broke into pieces and turned into a heap of debris
Hope
somewhere in the debris is buried
how long shall faith
in ruse in the vicinity hunt for the hope?



The Foil

Oh! The foil of paper
gaze not at me
with dumb eyes
in thy deserted carcass
the words are about to ring
the pen is in the family way.



Struggle

The tussle
that was the life
The anxiety
that is the death
It has to live
that is to say
to pass by
through a weary drill....
Let any rousing be pursued
to find a rational face.



The Gushing Stream

The stream knows not its course
on its own land
gets lost
the restlessness of the lost stream
dresses me up
the turbulent flow of the lost stream
is cloaking me !
my appearance is altering
how shall you find me
in these park lands?



Nursing

Whole night
the night
kept sucking my teat
and at the onset of dawn
napped on the morning...
and my infecund arms
under the sunny daylight
titillating my loneliness.



Wounds

The plug of word
 while putting on the scars of 'self'
 the pain of Nazam is pulled up
 something is at the back of words
 that in a Nazam stays behind unspecified.



Absence

More than my love
my 'being' is drained by tears
now that like tears I've been turned
and stops not on the face of life
(I) slip
from the face of life
repeatedly
or then
being crushed in the numb tissue paper
or in the handkerchief
or
in the impersonal coverlet
my absence
has served the face of my life.



Arms of Words

Let the limbs of words
caress my 'being'
it is pulsating fast,
He is the eye witness of love
Let the limbs of words
caress my 'being'
Is it the shadow of love
or unuttered discord?



Barren Eyes

No spark of salvage
seen in any eye
that could shrink the distension of inner heart!
The water level of river is gone down
the bays are drying up
on the scaly lips
the kiss of dew
is quivering.....
the trembling kiss on the bays
has to get seared
I have to cross the river
Why are you trailing behind?



Ravaged Me

In the void of ravaged 'self'
 at times the distraction of mind
 at times the intoxication
 at times the scent
 yet at times
 like a tranquil balloon puffs up
 in the harrowing ambits of self
 this is all happening,
 But
 In the void of ravaged 'self'
 What kind of anticipation is this?



The Inner Eye

Ah! Wish that it could be so
 that faith
 would rip the *Pharan* off
 to leak through
 the disentangled stitches
 blatantly leaving the self
 to wind up all the probability
 to let the inner eye relish a nap.



Farewell

The daughters are sent off
from maternal homes
to in-laws and to graves then...
What kind of daughter am I!
devoid of palanquin and visitants
(I) am being repeatedly sent off
and in the coffin of in-laws
being put in repeatedly
What kind of daughter am I!
devoid of maternal home
and in want of in-laws
in the cell of this universal calamity
where is my grave?



The Blink

The blink of thy slumber
 the fervour of love
 (I) have left it on the table
 wherein,
 the dates dipped in dew
 are awaiting for *Iftiyar*,
 in one saucer the dreams
 and in other anticipation
 how extensively shall the dawn
 spread its arms
 how on thy velvety sleep's breast
 shall the tears be couched?



The Dream

The scanty sin
 a bit of solace
 a few beams
 more than a few bits of cheerfulness
 a little of bravery
 a bit of undauntedness
 slight lifespan
 what all (one) needs
 the only dream
 that never falls apart
 the opulent appalled one.



An Oblivious Dream

The last night's dream
aroused a hope
throughout the night
the erroneous locks were done
by applying the scent of faith
on broken bead strings
with moonlight braid tassel and marked them
and then tied the stars of aspirations,
at the daybreak the fingers of hope
were probing the done locks
Dreams
do what all they wish to do
and that too
what all seems impossible
Are dreams oblivious?



Calamity

The calamities
 that have dropped weariness in my body
 how shall I disclose that to you?
 The heaps of excused betrayal
 stow it!
 Only weariness of calamities are left.



Dried Soil

Not tears
 but a Nazam
 even not the Nazam
 perhaps you
 by you my eye is pouring
 the soil of grave is drying up.



My Half

I am half
where is the next half
what a change
half turned half!
Half is gash
be an antidote to the gash....
Averting the eye
from the half
is an abuse!
Complete is the word only.



Creeper

Mike is an excuse
the entity of life
is detained in woeful creeper
(If) the lips of soul sway
the creeper will perish!



Foil of Tears

I am turning the pages of tears
the earth
wrapped in the blanket of snow
is teasing
my 'being' entrenched in snow
is gazing at the roof
it has to wriggle
and I have to freeze
neither the earth is seen
nor the roof.



Dreamy Eyes

Dream
from the lap of eyes
matured nay
what way it shall guide
wandering I am for
wandering has no takers
open sky
and endless dicey
boots in the arms I do carry
and the eyes embrace the dreams
shall I caress the dream
or to tie the bootlaces.



Butterflies on the Blades

On the blades of grass amidst butterflies
many dreams I have visualised
with the grass you are levelling
thy garden
ask the lawn
how its nerves stand witness to my passageways
bystander to my dreams
in the same lawn
How nature has put me on the nectar
how that we weave the lodgings
but who will accept the truth
of scorching sunlight's being nomadic?



Smiling Agonies

The agonies that once smiled
smile was thine
and agonies mine....
me forwarding the mail of thy smiles
agonies belong to me!
for ages the tears I have spun
to knit a roll of woes
and from the same roll
me cutting at will:
nighty, quilt and shroud,
in the nighty I spend the night
the quilt grants warmth
and wrapped in coffin
in the grave of solitude
I am being buried daily...



Swamp

The way you have stationed
 at the swamp
 you will be locked in
 if you walk away
 you will skid
 the swamp cannot
 drown you
 where shall you go
 where to move
 how much time is left
 to change the mood of the season
 before the swamp shall dry
 if you find a crack
 abscond...



Look with Thine Eyes

Looking at things from the unlike eyes
you have lost the precincts of faith
the mood of faith
is like the simpleton Wular
that relies on the eyes
had you ever fancied by thine eyes
on their deterioration
headgears are seamed
to make you to be certain
dreams interlace belief
let you see the things by thine eyes
not by unlike eyes.



O! the Wind

Seeking thyself
I am trembling
not even in the inner heart
I find any room
my liveliness
neither walk in distant angst
extended on the soil
nor a moment engulfs my liveliness...
O! wind
Let you hold the hands
relying on your feet
guide me nay how to walk
nay even guide me how to live
but only sow my liveliness in the clouds
O! wind.



Wreckage

No soil has enthralled me
 Kept roving in deserts
 the expanses in between
 slips into me
 to carve their *Khankah*
 and between the negation and affirmation
 to every *Khankah* (I) circumambulate
 and getting ruined in loops
 the idea of 'ash to ash' bangs my head.



Stillness of Self

In the stillness of my being
 any spark can flare up
 the graveyard of the soul is chockfull
 all plans
 dreams all
 abundant merits
 loads of love
 and the truths all
 are buried there.
 From which grave shall rise the flash?
 I know not
 but knows
 that the get-together of love
 are organised nowhere now
 that in the downpour of oneness
 shall flare up a spark nay!
 And on the table of animosity
 morsel is stuck in my throat
 and breaks the voice of my verses
empty guts
speechless voice
 and a spark
 whose dream I am
 do seek in the eternal sleep!



Disruption

Why are (you) sowing confusions?
 with the passage of time
 the clouds evaporate
 and the sun shall come to light
 new leaflets shall flourish
 the sprig of confusions
 shall bear the flowers of hate
 the flower shall be deprived of its aroma
 the soil shall fracture its chest
 and excavate from the filed
 thy floor.



Involve Me Not

Include me nay
 in this pageant
 that lacks impetus
 (it is) just a showoff,
 a bluster only
 and me trapped
 in how many disrupted secrets....
 for the rain of mercy
 the self of this frame is sweltering
 the truth of secret is entwining
me featurelessly
telling the beads
to pick up any nugget
 that shall reveal the mystery
 to stop this pageant,
 to disentangle the involution.



Hiccough

I'm his last hiccough
 masticated by soil
 from the lips of soil tricking the blood
 I drank up
 How long shall the blood stay in my throat?
 It shall ooze
 from the sealed lips of my body
 to the pandiculation of soul
 I shall into bits be
 after exorcising on the life
 but that shall rise
 from any stroke of mine
 within the vortexes
 in the angst of my soul
 I am his last hiccough!



Listen to the Nazams

Do listen to the Nazams, are you fed up
 Come on do read the kohl of my eyes
 but when
 the eyes are picking-up the lethal residue
 the kohl, the dreams and maquillages
 all die away
 the kohl in union with soil
 gives birth to the duskiest dark
 the dreams are put on the wheel of potter
 and the maquillage all
 is dodging in the hairdo
 drowning in the Jhelum
 in the vacant eyes
 sojourn remoteness
 from the soul no message passes on to them
 either a bang of union
 or the silence of separation
 shall I read the untaken eyes
 or shall I live with inaccessibility?
 It is better to listen to the nazam
 entitled: The kohl in the plosive eye.



Cross Connection

Nazam was on for offering
but no congregation took place
the *azan*
from all the *masjids*
echoed together
but none of the muezzin was clear



Language of Soul

Love is not
that on the string of the body resonate
Love is that in thy absence
be the language of my soul.



Existence

O! life
I have no wisdom
I am a word
cased in vocabulary
how shall I be embodied ?



Graveyard

Yet again (I) arrived at the graveyard
.....exoteric deluge
.... esoteric deluge
the exoteric overflow is breaking up
but how shall I in my cell go into
I am in the flood swelled
esoteric flood I have abandoned.



Circumambulation

Those who circumambulate
with you around Kaaba
have failed to neglect you
in the rat race of this world
you spend thy entire life
without trailing thy breath
but on the couch of ICU
amidst noisy machines
why are you sinking?



Fancy

No one like you
is laying his eyes on me
with passion in the eyes
and love on the lips
you were there
...why
but it was a dream only!



Beloved Vocation

You expend thy budget
only to order the French perfumes
I but crept into the Nazam
to extract the musk
and from the day I fall for
the aroma
Nazam has turned to be my
Beloved vocation.



Birth

Of mortal abrasions I belong to
every consumed curiosity
gives birth to a Nazam.



Mother

I'm a mother of those lighter moments
that you decked up on your face
in the despondency my soul is worn-out
but I failed to festoon
thy lips with a measly smile...



Pay Out

Pay out
lavishly pay out today
the wallet of life is losing its seam.



Unexpressed Love

In the soul of my soil
the unexpressed love
remained unstated state
like a spurious coin
in the market of love
coins nay but adroitness was mandatory...



Life

Life
for which you hunger after
why to me is invisible ?



A Slipped Word

A slipped word
from the rosary of soul
nay grows in any soil
but in the cloud stayed concealed
The cloud
descended into the eye of the soul
and turned into an ocean
now the word
fails to come out of the ocean.



Insane Water

Oh! Insane water
 Where are (you) coursing (me)
 for sake on the bay post me
 my shroud
 is getting ripped apart
 Oh! Insane water
 Lest (you) should drift my cell!



Cunning Fists

In the cunning fists I am being repressed
deceits are squeezing me
my entity is like that of a velvet
devoid of weft and warp.



Efforts

Thy efforts
to terminate me
will not go waste
I shall be donating my voice
to put on the silence
you need not change your colours
like a chameleon.



Prayer

Papa
Do open the mouth
of thy cell
let me come in
among thy visitors
traceless is my grave.



Season

(You) talk of seasons
of not but moods
in the season of love
the thought must not through thy eye
but through the eye of soul
be sought
an oblation of loyalty
is the colossal sacrifice.



In Search

In search of a man
my face has turned
into a boulder
in the appalling voices
of animals
I have lost mine
sarsen face
voiceless existence
how horrible it would be
are you mindful of it?
What all is, what do you see
You claim Godhead!



Anguish

I am not talcum on my frame
I wish to sprinkle
salt on my body
wish to break the ice
that for ages is frozen
can you kindle the embers of associations?
I want to divorce my eyes
from the cascading salt
that for ages are farming the tears
can you offer dreams
to my eyes?
Nay in the unsettled world
but in the ambience of active self
I wish to have a house of mine
Now that I wish to obey my feelings
Can you speak within me?



Tracks

On which track of the road
you are lost?
Thy absence has but
put me on the roads
wherefrom (God knows)
how many tracks originate
in search of you
every track in a moving state is lost
not dropping any news of you
I am deprived of thy presence
You
are all that I have lost!



In the Desert of Life

To decipher you
would walk in front to ravel (me)
when had I thought so?
now what wisdom to claim
when the power of listening, speaking and seeing
and abilities are all inept!
In thy well foliated jungle of perception
not only five
I am losing my sixth sense as well
You
in the jungle of life keep celebrating
and me
in the forest of life (I) stay as an unyielding pole
Life
is bereft of my senses.



Silken Sweater

When I was a child
 from the lap of my mother's
 silken sweater
 I would slip and weep...
 Now that I am full-grown
 in the lap of life
 I would often skid from its silken touch
 and weep...



The Empty Trolley

On the belt
is spinning a bag of dreams
how to hold it?
the joints of fingers
on sieving the sand
have dried up!
In the eyes of airhostess
the kohl of dreams
was soggy....
My eyes in the lost memories of love
(were) tossing their head
the crowd of clammy life
are carrying the dreams in the trollies
to approach the pre-paid taxi
and on actuality
directionless mist
is creeping
(and) I am holding
an empty trolley of the airport.



In Quest of

I am not a poetess
but a quest,
a disquiet
floating in my serum
consistently...
speaking in my soul
endlessly
a craving
that fills the pursuit
like melody breath sweetens the flute.



The Music of Commotion

In the arms of stir, the pulsating voice
 is mislaying in missed calls
 in the bumpy cushion's confines
 thy aroma
 creates a havoc 'within'
 and in loudspeakers
 the resonance of *masjid*
 (It is) Shab-i-Qadar
 The night of love
 where have you restricted



Journey of My Dead Body

How my dead body shall be
descended from the third floor
through two narrow stairways
and then who will bring the dead body down
a massive spirited corpse
how shall my remains on uncompassionate shoulders bank on
and whose shoulders
my kinfolds
to whom I am alien!
Elsewhere their priorities
must bother them not to cart my dead body
to the balcony of my third floor
I am reflecting inertly!



Console

Console is such a boundary
 that encompasses me
 but disposes me of the soul
 from the studio...
 the soul in wandering
 shall be mislaid
 and on the console shall only the dummy be fixed
 the mike will keep
 its head tuning...

◆◆◆

◆◆◆

Prostration

The treachery
 has put my autonomy
 in deposition
 my faith
 pleasures, 'love' and dream
 between the layers turned into ash!
 The expressions of impressions succumbed
 Life but nay succumbs, I am petrified!
 the treacherous are unconcerned to God
 they ablute with water, soil and sand
 five times a day
 by the froth of pretence
 and in fierce gesture prostrate
 and I
 in the prostration murmur
 "Oh! Death seize me"
 Life but nay succumbs, I am petrified!



Journey of Verses

Shattered
 You have shattered the nazam
 at the dawn runs with me
 on treadmill
 with me was on the run,
 kneading the flour,
 on slab and pestle grinding spices
 from the kitchen too
 had accompanied me!
 While taking a shower
 had cloaked in my breath
 I have even
 during makeup
 nursed my lips with its nectar,
 on the breakfast table
 with me was relishing the sips!
 With me escorted throughout the journey
 while crossing the river
 in my boat besides me
 was rocking,
 in my office too
 holding my finger
 was climbing the steps,
 shattered
 You have shattered the nazam
 with whom I shall return from the office at night?
 shattered
 You have shattered the nazam!



Companion

When I
at thy bower
like a faithful one
was quivering
then you withdrew me
from thy zone
You
in the club of festivity
why are you now turning to me
after being dissipated with deceitful outbreak?



Screen of Life

Thy love
is such a drizzle
that can impede
the way!
Making the wiper out of the tongue
to wipe off the screen of life
repeatedly.



Adoration

Some word
 carts dynamite within
 that drips down the lips
 and blows off the edifice of love...
 and under the debris
 gets buried everything
 even the script of love as well.



The Butterfly Catcher

Extended on three thousand Kanals
 an astonishing
 ruined building's
 third floor is a detainee
 who can realise her anguish?
 in exposed fields
 on azure skies
 from the rainbow catching eye
 the sky is unnoticeable
 who can realise her anguish?
 Passing through the reddish-pink appled pass ways
 is stranded on the nook of the city
 the one who is inhaling the smoke
 has been brought up in the fragrance of apples
 who can realise her anguish?
 Napping amiably in the songs of soil and water
 has but her womb plentiful with turbulent sleeplessness
 who can realise her anguish?
 The soil is craving for her boots
 to be crushed down
 for the one who would catch butterflies
 in five lawns where is her own
 who can realise her anguish?
 Who can but realise the anguish of that saintly one
 that in her lawns had but secrets of seven springs
 and she but remained
 thirsty



Sweetheart

(I am nay) the beloved of sweetheart
but of midstream
at times like tide....
at times like froth...
at times like the flow...
at times like water....
..... but (I am) faithful like faith
(I am) tide
(I am) froth
(I am) the flow
of the water
what all I am
a busted love I am
...but like faith
Faithful I am.



Unclothed Loneliness

You have submitted your will to Lord
 You have offered 1825 Salahs
 and conquered the year
 I have but submitted mine to you
 lost my attire
 and earned the seclusion
 to cover the nakedness of isolation
 I put on sundry exoduses
 how many papers (I) pruned....
 Shabnam Ashai
 Whether it is Jawahar Nagar's third floor
 or the palace of Taper Pattan
 the loneliness is but naked!.



Prominence

His prominence
has but isolated me
and my warmth (he) chilled
on the frosty roads of adorations
the feet of essence skid off...
the bone breaking loneliness
is pushing me into the bin of fire
I put on the ash
and prominence the spark!



Postman

The postman
delivered letters
that thy death stopped it not
but the envelopes are all blank...
nothing in them...
thy death has my eyes blinded
and seized to see any word!



Covid

Before the Covid-19 pandemic
no one had a clue
that life is
a mere experiment
of forlornity...





Dr. Shabnam Ashai has done Ph.D from Aligarh Muslim University. She has worked on existentialism. She has written a monograph on "Camus Concept of Alienation" and a book on existentialism namely existentialistic concept of Alienation.

Presently she is broadcaster at Radio Kashmir Srinagar. She has six poetic collection namely *Akeli*, *Mein Sochte Houn*, *Ishq Khawab Khushboo*, *Mann Bani*, *Catharsis*, *Mann Bavath* (Kashmiri translation of *Mann Bani*) and *Mann Mein Jami Baraf*. She has not taken the path of traditional Urdu poets who have tried to completely break away from the traditional mode of expression.

Her poems are witness to her talent - the powerful expression of intricate feelings of relationship in a fresh, thoughtful and reflective language. It is saga of being. It is a woman's reflection on relationship. Its not a confrontation but a narrative full of questions.



Mushtaque B Barq is a novelist, translator, columnist, critic besides a poet and short story writer. His earlier translation work *Mystic Voices of Kashmir* has earned him a name in the field of translating Kashmiri Sufi poetry into English. The author was awarded 'Editor's Choice Award' for outstanding achievement in poetry presented by Poetry.com USA and International Library of Poetry in 2007. In 2017, the author was felicitated by *The Criterion*

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